Sereno Watson

Notes II.

July 18th – 31st, 1880.

Shinburg's to Missoula,
Montana.

Watson
N-10

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HARVARD UNIVERSITY

THE GIFT OF

The Misses Watson of Northhampton
(nieces of Dr. Sereno Watson)
April 28, 1924.

Watson N-10

Altitude about 6 000 feet.

Red Rock P. Office (Shimberger's)
Montana Territory.

July 19th, Monday.
Take stage at 6 a.m. and reach Bannack City at 11, — about 22 miles. Follow down the Red Rock Creek 4 or 5 miles (banks here nearly bare of cottonwood and willows), then up Horse Prairie creek and across into Grasshopper valley. Only the main range upon the west has some scattered timber.
Bannock lies in the mouth of a gulch through which the Grasshopper creek runs down to the Red Rock. Bald Mountain is a high peak to the northwest, some 12 or 15 miles distant. Can

not get a horse for it until to-
morrow, so go down the creek a
half mile and climb the hills
south of town and a thousand
feet higher. Some trees, mainly
Douglas' Spruce, with some
Pinus flexilis and a little
Juniper. Make partial assump-
ments for team to Missoula,
as there are no stage connec-
tions beyond this point.

Bannack City, Montana.

July 20th — Tuesday. Got a horse and start at 9 a.m. for Bald Mountain, following up the Grasshopper 4 miles, and then a main canon 6 or 7 miles to the cabin of a miner by the name of Odell, who has spent 10 years prospecting upon the mountain and is just on the point of striking a very rich lead. Botanize over the foothills. Trees mostly Douglas' Spruce. Odell takes me in for the night.

altitude of his cabin 7000 feet.

July 21 [illegible] Wednesday.

Start at 6 a.m. Up ridge to base of peak and gorge beyond [illegible] of grassy space. Snow nearly. Rhododendron and gentian rather abundant. Upper timber mostly Abies grandis and P. contorta, especially the latter at the timber line, which I reach at 10 a.m. Aneroid reading 14,600, therm. 62°. Peak base of trap, of loose angular quartzite, hard to climb, snow patches occupied by masses of the highest alpine flowers. Reach summit at 11½, the aneroid reading 16,100 & therm. 61½, making altitude 10,100 feet. There is a considerable talus peak some miles to the north, the basin between densely filled

with timber, and is in Douglas' spruce ("red pine"), Abies grandis ("red fir"), and Pinus contorta ("black pine"). Hardly in Douglas lakes are in sight, scattering 'th, although now and & also with trees. The main range to the Fraser is very much more dense, open, and much higher than the (red) lake.

Down on 1/4 P.m. and find that the horses have wandered off into hollow and gone home by the wrong camp. Pack up hastily & finish repair, and back to Stella's homesteading from the camp, and after lunch with pedestrian assistance to Hammock getting in about 5 P.m. Report to the owner of the horses, who will send boy for them in the morning. See Mr. Stella and

average for Elko to Winnemucca, 190 miles — a light spring wagon with two horses, to haul and furnish provisions, for just one day going and there you have a very more reasonable Eastern Mode of travel than I had to expect.

The only available man Bonnemark is on Rattlesnake Creek, 12 miles northwest, owned by Hudson Track (of Track & Graves). The best timber, large and clear, is brought from the Salmon River region, about ten sawmills.

Edible sage the most prime of herbs, Prince nonesuch, is found on the hills around Bonnemark. I want nothing spicy. Will ask him to send a specimen.

July 26th. Thursday.

Making preparations for this week's trip. Some large dogs around on a branch of the creek above town, occasionally over 6 feet high. Went for a clean trip would make a specimen of wood 2 inches long and 2½ square, but do not succeed in finding it. Have brought back all room, all right, but rabbits missing. Arrange to have it mended for and hide for any damage to be done to room at Wilmington. Start at 4 P.M., and camp 10 miles up the valley at a hardscrabble cabin, the first to shelter. Thunder storm and torrential rain at night. Sleep outside in my blankets.

I would bring dishes as [illegible] per.

July 21st. Friday.

Travel up Grasshopper Valley to divide, then ranges with occasional timber (Douglas' spruce), rather abundant on the western side, and coming down to the head of the valley on the divide. Aneroid reading 7200, thermometer 70° (= altitude 7460).

Go down into Big Hole Valley, noted for its grass and timber, a broad valley (5 to 6 miles wide in places), with numerous streams and springs. Road on the south side, branch on the hot springs (22 miles), there is a decided hot water. Temperature of the spring 142°, of air 74°, aneroid reading 6350. Push on to the crossing of the Big Hole Creek (16 miles further) and camp at

the cabin of the Overland Freight Company's herdsman (2 young fellows), who have charge of 250 horses in the valley. Snow covered the ground last winter from the middle of November to mid-Feb. of 1889, for great deep on a level.

The valley is bordered on the west by the high mountains seen from Basin Mountain, very broken and rocky and nearly covered with snow, apparently cut up into basins by very high transverse ridges, a dozen or so, running westerly. Numerous timber in the basins and on the slopes, and from the foothills to the border of the valley. Mr. Ellis describes it as mainly "black pine" (P. contorta). He has been

in view of the northern basin there is a lower and rounded forest timber. At the head of this range and opposite the crossing of Big Hole Creek is a low pass and trail leading to Gibbonsville, a mining town on the North Fork of Salmon River. The continuation of this range to the north and northeast is lower, with rounded ridges, but becoming again high and snow-peaked in the northeast in the direction of French Butte and Lemhi. This is the main divide of the Rocky Mountains, separating the streams that flow into the Missouri from the head waters of the Columbia.

Frequenter [illegible] but no [illegible].

Friday 26th — Saturday.

Forded the Big Hole creek and sloughs with a little difficulty and crossed the valley to the mouth of Trail Creek canon and the "battleground", where Gibbons attacked the Nez Perces in 1877. Sixteen miles across, but rough very indirect, through deep sandy in mouth of canon and then for one of miles, camping at night by the creek in a little prairie. Low ranges on both sides gravelly from decomposed granite and densely wooded, especially the southern. Trees almost wholly Pinus contorta, with occasional Abies grandis (Red fir), and on a single young 3-4 leaved pine like P. flexilis — mostly smoke

and young, evidently frequently overrun by fires and new growth immediately replacing the old.

Jul, 2 – Sunday.

Rain in night and shelter arrangement (under an old Indian lodge) insufficient. Thunderstorm after breakfast from NNW. Situated off camp about 6500 feet. Comes off pleasant. Only two willows along the creek. Trees and underbrush for supplies.

been written down.

Ebbis except the yellow River is also found in some way in crossing the divide to Hibernia in hands of Westport of Sassenach River.

July 26th. Monday.

Start at 6.45 and follow up the canon. Ascend very gradually with occasional grassy openings. Round the divide find a few small trees of P. flexilis (?), some small Balsams (young Douglas Spruce ?), more Abies grandis (cones in abundance), and some large Douglas Spruce. Pinus contorta still the most prevalent, very rarely 15–20 inches through. Reach divide at 10.30. Aneroid reading 6900 + Therm. 66°.

Xerophyllum ("Pine grass") abundant on the divide. Descend rapidly for two miles to the valley through heavy woods chiefly of fine Pinus ponderosa ("Yellow Pine"), with some large Douglas Spruce and some P. contorta. Many new plants seen on the descent — Ceanothus velutinus, Leptodactylon,

Spirit in Lithographic, Philadelphia,
Penna, 20. Rocky valley and [illegible]
rocks at 12.00 [illegible] in [illegible]
yellow cats. Arrived [illegible] 5.00 –
Penna. 21. Continue work around p.
Pass the week through a splendid
gorge of P. paradoxus to Rock Hill
and then down a long narrow
canyon, passing the Rattlesnake
for some time, and making camp
in open patch near the mouth.
Much snow up Alamo, Boulder, and
continued on the week – the latter
different from Rock on this Rock hill
Conglomerate on the cliffs, vertically
six feet high but always crumbling.
Only conifers in the canyon P. paradoxus
and Douglas Spruce.

[illegible]

July 27th Tuesday.

Camp Nutting – Barometer 4760, Therm. 51°. Got up the canyon and down the Bitterroot, fording the creek, crossing and into the canyon, to Flood's Ranch and thence to Stevensville. Only 8 prospectors in the valley and no mountain sickness. Mountains on the west (Bitterroot Range) high and snowy and very rough. Rock Creek comes in here from the west, very swift and high with a rocky bed, and we do not dare to cross it. The Bitterroot is below its mouth. Prospects for gold in Stevensville gulch and will return it in the morning. Fine country for cattle. Chemistry [illegible] in the bottoms and very showy with its abundant white blossoms – clean like a prairie rose, claiming to get

Triple or ex. [illegible] and
[illegible] putting pipe. Rain
[illegible].

Second reading 4 to 4 — Thurs. 44'.

Rock Creek gulch 100 by 200 feet in the
right.

Address —

W. P. Hawkins, Rockville, Montana.

July 26th Wednesday.

A cold rain which is passing in the mountains. Cross the bitter root by the road fork and work a way across the alluvial and bottom on the other side to the graded road. By help of outlook and a local are we in getting over the "grade" and reach Hardin's ranch in a rather sick condition. Stop for the rest of the day and night. Plenty of fine strawberries, milk and cream, to drink on our round. Large good garden with plenty of vegetables of all kinds. Hardin interested in botany, of which he has finished up a little knowledge under difficulties, and pretty well acquainted with the flora. Talks of a "cutoff" in the mountains across the river.

July 24th — Thursday.

Clear again. Aneroid reading 3760, temp. 41° at 7 a.m.

Examine Hartlan's "Scrub pine" or "Black jack pine" and find it to be young P. ponderosa, which some call "Black pine". Ellis' "Black pine" (P. contorta) he calls "White pine" or "Lodge pole pine". Cold overhead again. Some Douglas' spruce in the valley — young trees have smooth blistered bark like balsam fir. Reach Stalkaho and find a branch of the "Cedar" or "Arborvitae" among the Chinook Indians for lodge poles — apparently Thuya gigantea. Same as Corvallis. Cross bridge at Hermiville & camp for night near the river. Scattered pines along the valley (P. ponderosa)

[illegible] the high [illegible] mountains to
the east [illegible] with [illegible]. In the
low mountains each "arub pine"
and "black pine" [illegible] [illegible]
[illegible] [illegible] the highest of
the range [illegible] [illegible] to [illegible].

(Mount) [illegible] the camp

3430 – Mount [illegible] 210 [illegible]

3400 – " [illegible] 6[illegible] [illegible]

July 30th – Friday.

To Missoula (28 miles), crossing Lolo Creek, Bitterroot River, and Hellgate Creek by bridges. Creek bottoms with plenty of alder, thorny shrubbery, willows, cottonwood, etc.

To north of Lolo Creek the west range becomes lower and bluffs around north to the north west. Missoula is the prettiest place yet seen, on the high bank of the Hellgate Creek at the mouth of the western mountains. The military post is some miles south.

July 31st. Saturday.

Shift plants, &c. In afternoon to the Grant, to get information and see what can be done. Col. Gibson at the Coeur d'Alene reservation and Capt. Penrose come a fishing.